

**Kate Blystone - Fwd: Request for Additional Information For Birch Bay UGA**

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**From:** PDS  
**To:** David Stalheim; Kate Blystone  
**Date:** 10/13/2009 3:35 PM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Request for Additional Information For Birch Bay UGA

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>>> "Wendy Harris" <w.harris2007@comcast.net> 10/13/2009 12:24 PM >>>

**RE: Request For Additional Information Regarding Birch Bay Watershed Pilot Study**

Dear PDS Staff:

Thank you for your responsiveness and hard work in providing the County Planning Commission several different methodologies for determining where land should be removed from the Birch Bay UGA, as reflected in Director Stalheim's 10/9/09 memorandum. I know that this is a difficult time for PDS Staff, with many demands made upon your time and resources. I would not be requesting additional information if I did not believe that it was important.

The Planning Commission requested that Staff rely upon the "Birch Bay Watershed Characterization and Watershed Planning Pilot Study (the pilot study)" as one basis for determining an appropriate method for reduction. As you know, the Planning Commission will discuss this matter in two days, on October 15, 2009. While the PDS staff did respond to the Planning Commissions' request, I believe that additional information is necessary with regard to the Pilot Study to assist the Planning Commission in making the best determination. The Pilot Project can be found at the following County hyperlink:

<http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us/pds/naturalresources/specialprojects/pdf/birchbay>

I respectfully request the following information be made available to the Planning Commission and the public:

- An overlay map of the Pilot Project and Executive Kremin's proposed amended Birch Bay UGA
  - I have reviewed the Pilot Project maps and the proposed amended UGA map and have been unable to reconcile the two. This is not surprising since they were done at different times for different purposes. The Pilot Project maps generally do not reflect streets and roads, and thus, while delineated sub-basins have been prioritized for protection, restoration or development, it is difficult to understand where these areas exist in relationship to the Executive's proposed UGA boundaries. It would be extremely helpful to have a more immediate and visual way to see the 4 areas that the PDS staff has identified for possible removal, and how this

relates to Pilot project recommendations, particularly since there is a Pilot Project map that is color-coded to reflect the level of protection recommended for specific areas of the watershed. This request is also reflected in a letter submitted by Keats Garmin on 10/5/09.

- Provide More Specific Information Regarding the Pilot Project and Subsequent Actions Taken by the Birch Bay Community that Conform with the Pilot Project
  - The Pilot Project resulted in specific management recommendations. However, this requires an understanding of the management categories, which were based on the value of watershed processes (hydrology, denitrification, and pathogen removal) and the level of alteration in each sub-basin. This was used as a basis for creation of management goals for protection, restoration and development, all of which incorporated a level of flexibility and discretion. Additionally, WDFW created 4 wildlife overlay zones that specified recommended dwelling densities and treatment of roads and traffic. (Table 7-5, pages 73-76.) The Pilot Project even identified areas where there would be anticipated conflict between management goals and development pressure. (Table 7-6, pages 78-79.) The Pilot Project contains a brief discussion of UGA's, TDR's and LID (pages 81-86.) Most importantly, PDS staff should explain how and why BAS has led the EPA and DOE to advocate planning on a comprehensive watershed basis and how simply adopting or removing certain portions of the proposed amended UGA does not represent the type of watershed based management strategies reflected in the Pilot Study. It is also important for PDS staff to explain how the Birch Bay Watershed and Aquatic Resource Management District, (BBWARM), is an extension of a recommended Action Plan resulting from the Pilot Project, and the important role and function BBWARM should play in assisting in development issues that will impact stormwater and water quality issues within the Birch Bay watershed.
- Alternative Locations For Recently Added Blaine/Alderson Town Center Node
  - As noted in the PDS staff memo, the Blaine/Alderson intersection exists in an area that has been identified as high priority for restoration. It should be determined whether there are alternative locations for a Town Center Node, if determined to be necessary, that would have less harmful impacts on the ecological function of the Birch Bay Watershed.
- Identification of the Property Owners Who Will Benefit From Addition of the Blaine/Alderson Town Center Node
  - UGA's were created to fulfill a number of community needs, and natural resource issues should be considered in conjunction with infrastructure needs, future population growth and land ownership patterns. Because the proposed amended UGA added the Blaine/Alderson Town Node, despite the fact that there did not appear to be a need to increase the Birch Bay UGA, because this Node does consider the natural resource concerns of the entire community, and because the current UGA and LAMIRD update process has been subject to enormous pressure from individual property owners wishing to "cash in", disclosure of who owns

property and who stands to profit from the Blaine/Alderson Town Center Node may be relevant to the Planning Commission's determination.

Thank you for consideration of my request for additional information to assist the Planning Commission in determining whether and where land should be removed from the Birch Bay UGA.

Sincerely,

Wendy Harris  
Bellingham Resident